

Informed Decision Making and Prostate Cancer Screening: Steps and Examples*

- 1. Understanding prostate cancer**
 - Risk factors for prostate cancer (age, family history, African-American)
 - Natural history of prostate cancer (may be slow-growing or aggressive)
 - Treatment options for prostate cancer
- 2. Understanding prostate cancer screening: benefits, risks, limitations, alternatives and uncertainties**
 - Benefit: PSA screening can find prostate cancer sooner than digital rectal examination
 - Risk: A positive PSA test can lead to more invasive tests, treatment for prostate cancer has serious side effects
 - Limitation: Many men screened with PSA get false positives (the test is positive but they do not have cancer) and some get false negatives (the test is negative but they do have cancer)
 - Alternatives: Men can choose to be screened with PSA, DRE, both, or not to get screened
 - Uncertainty: The PSA test is controversial; we don't know yet whether regular screening for prostate cancer will reduce the number of deaths from prostate cancer
- 3. Considering your own preferences and values about prostate cancer screening**
 - Some men feel that more information is always better and PSA/DRE are good to do because they're the best tools we have right now
 - Other men feel that they'd rather not get screened because the screening tests and/or benefits of treatment are uncertain
 - Broader values can also come into play and affect screening decisions
 - Good IDM tools help men think about these issues
- 4. Participating in decision making at the level you want and are comfortable with**
 - Do you want to make the decision yourself?
 - Do you want to decide with your doctor?
 - Do you want your doctor to decide?
- 5. Making a decision consistent with your preferences**
 - IDM should help men make a decision they're happy with, regardless of outcome
 - This decision does not have to be yes or no; some men might prefer to wait to make a decision until a later time (to think about the issues, discuss with spouse, etc.)

*The bullet points are examples of issues that are relevant and/or could be covered with informed decision making interventions and tools, not comprehensive lists of all the issues.